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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Conditions in Piaski nad Odra: Agriculture, Industry,  
Security/Nearby Chojna Airfield.

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Population

2. "The village of Piaski on the Oder River has about 450 inhabitants. All the Germans have left the village. Their farms have been turned over to Poles. The older people in the village make their living by farming their small plots. The young people work in the local sawmill or gravel pit.

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Agriculture

3. "The smallholders in Piaski are still individual farmers. The largest farms are about six hectares. The name of the village is appropriate: the land is very sandy, yielding poor crops. The main crops are rye and potatoes.
4. "Situation of an individual villager with a house on one and one half hectares with one pig and one cow:
- (a) Tax on house and land: 740 zl every six months.
  - (b) Cultivates potatoes and vegetables. Annual delivery quota for potatoes: 450 kg. The State paid (1952) 18 zl per cubic meter (100 kg). The same amount would have commanded 45-50 zl on the free market.
  - (c) Annual delivery quota of meat: 75 kg. The State paid 8 zl per kg. The free market price was three times more.

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- (d) Annual delivery quota of milk: 460 liters. The collection dairy paid only .25 zl per liter. In the winter when the cow was dry milk cost 2 zl per liter on the free market. The village shop had no milk for sale.
- (e) Annual delivery quota for grain: two cubic meters. Since the villager did not grow any he had to buy his delivery quota from his neighbors.
- (f) To feed a family of three, the villager had to buy about 350 zl of food each month to supplement home produce.
5. "Piaski has no machine and tractor station. It is not yet collectivized. The Communists consider as kulaks and enemies of the people any peasants who own more than eight hectares of land and any who have not executed their compulsory deliveries. Most peasants lag behind in their deliveries: the quotas are too high; the state prices too low. But there are fines for failure to make deliveries. Clearly the State has pursued a policy of ruining individual farmers to make them ripe for collectivization.
6. "At Gorny Lubichowlec, about six km from Piaski, there is a collective farm (kolkhoz) with 150 members. The former estate of Krzymow has become a state farm (PGR). Compared to the private farms both the kolkhoz and the PGR are badly managed. In 1952 large quantities of potatoes were left lying in the fields when winter came. Most of the peasants are violently opposed to collective farming. They complain that they are badly paid, must surrender most of their harvest and have insufficient food to eat themselves. Only the poorest--those who had a bad lot before World War II are reconciled to Communism. But their number is small, and they too object to political supervision.

Industry

7. "The local gravel pit (zwirownia) in Piaski employs 75 workers, paid (1952) between 450 and 900 zl per month. Until June 1952 a Polish Jew from the USSR (fnu) Kronenberg was the manager. [redacted]

[redacted] In June production had so fallen off that they decided to close down the pit. The workers revolted. At a stormy meeting of the production council they insisted on Kronenberg's dismissal. The authorities had to send another man. He is Eng (fnu) Staszlag, a Communist but a man who knows his job.

8. "There is a branch of Centrala Przemyslu Węglowego in Piaski employing six workers. They cut timber for the coal mines.

Communism

9. "The village bailiff must hold a village meeting (zebranie gromadzie) each week. At these meetings he informs the villagers of new regulations and government decrees.
10. "The village has about 15 active CP members. The local secretary is a peasant (fnu) Majchrzyk. Everything he owns he has got from the Party, including the furniture in his house. He makes his reports to the Powiatowa Rada Narodowa at Debno. The rest of the villagers don't care a hoot about Communism, although some of them are enrolled as CP members.

Security

11. "Piaski is situated on the Oder River. It is only 200 m from the village to the frontier. The bank along the Oder is fenced: wooden poles strung with barbed wire. About every 500 m, depending on the terrain, there is a watchtower.

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12. "A curfew was instituted in 1948. Villagers are forbidden to leave their homes after nine pm.
13. "The village has its UB informers. Everybody knows who they are and avoids them. One is (fnu) Mazurkiewicz, the keeper of the state-owned timber depot of Paged. Another is (fnu) Kosciolok, a worker at the sawmill. A third is Jerzy Siekierski, a farmer.
14. "A special permit is required for a visit to Piaski. This is issued by the district (Chojnice) or voievodship national council. Persons who want to become residents of the village must also get a special permit. Seamen need no special permit for Piaski because their seaman's book covers the frontier area inland as well as on the coast.
15. "A unit of 20 WOP soldiers with dogs is billeted in Piaski. It guards a frontier sector of about nine km. The next WOP stations are at Belinek (six km from Piaski) and at Krajnik Dolny (nine km from Piaski). In 1952 the chief of the Piaski WOP unit was (fnu) Pawlok, a young Communist. The WOP schedule is strenuous: 16 hours of duty and eight hours of sleep. After every four hours of regular duty they have two hours of patrol duty. Occasionally on Saturday or Sunday they have a few free hours to go into the village and dance. The villagers don't mind the WOP soldiers, but they are pronouncedly hostile towards the officers.
16. "Sometimes people try to escape westwards over the Oder in the Piaski area. Such fugitives are hunted by both the Pol'sh and the German frontier guards. In early 1953 a miller from Olsztyn, a man who had lived abroad and been repatriated to Poland after the war, tried to escape. He was caught, tried and sentenced to death. Some persons who had tried to escape with him or to help him were sentenced for life.
17. "There have been instances of attacks on WOP men in this frontier area.

#### Censorship

18. "Letters from Konstantynow in the part of Poland incorporated into the USSR take a devious route to reach Piaski. First they go to Wilno, then to Minsk, then to Moscow, then back to Wilno whence they are sent to Poland. This route is indicated by the marks stamped on the envelopes. The letters are always censored, and some parts are painted over with a black dye. (The people write that all the farms have been collectivised and that persons have been brought from the interior of the USSR to replace those repatriated to Poland proper). It takes about three months to get a reply to a letter written from Piaski to Konstantynow.

#### Nearby Chojna Airfield

19. "At Chojna, about 18 km from Piaski, on the frontier, is one of Poland's largest airfields. The Soviets keep jet aircraft there in underground hangars. In 1951 two Soviet squadrons were stationed at Chojna. They went on to Berlin and were replaced. In early 1953 there was a division at Chojna. Some Soviet antiaircraft artillery has also been brought to Chojna. Although the planes and plane crews on the airfield are Soviets, the workers there are Poles. They get 1000 zl a month. The officers stationed at this airfield live in the town. The soldiers live in barracks near the field and may go to town only in groups. Both the officers and the soldiers are forbidden contact with the local population. They behave decently on the whole, and one hears of no outrages.
20. "Near the Chojna airfield a large estate has been turned over to the Soviets. The workers on this estate are Poles who earn 750 zl a month. The estate has all kinds of agricultural machines and is farmed better than the average Polish PGR. In addition to the food produced there the Soviets in Chojna buy what they need at the local Polish cooperative."

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